

MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



FY19 Maryland Department of Health Customer Service Annual Report





MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

October 1, 2019

I'm proud to share with you the FY19 Customer Service Report which details the important work we have been doing and the changes we have made in the last year at the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to improve the customer service experience for the citizens of Maryland.

The Governor's Customer Service Promise, created in 2016, is the guiding principle that set a new standard of customer service across state government. Since its adaptation, innovation within state agencies, collaboration with Maryland companies, and service delivery improvements have raised the standards exponentially.

I share Governor Hogan's commitment and dedication to providing exceptional customer service to every constituent, every time, across the state. This report demonstrates the intentional, focused culmination of services provided by a team of people who care about their work, while striving to create a culture of putting Marylanders first. Through the deliberate process and service delivery improvements highlighted throughout this report, MDH has successfully provided outstanding customer service, maintained professional integrity, and supported our valued communities. At MDH, we are striving to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Marylanders by delivering outstanding customer service.

Our path to customer service excellence doesn't stop here; in some ways, we're only just beginning. Several advancements occurred in FY19, including the introduction of a new web-based cloud software to manage correspondence from constituents, and a newly structured Office of Constituent Services. With the vision of lifelong health and wellness, the Office of Constituent Services works to support, promote, and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders. They work closely with constituents and with their colleagues to resolve concerns in a courteous, timely, consistent, accurate, convenient, and transparent manner. The Office consists of a director, deputy director, and 3 constituent services liaisons. This team is focused on providing personal attention to constituent matters by making the appropriate connections within MDH, and by identifying the best solutions and resources to our constituents, the residents of Maryland.

I am pleased with the progress that the Maryland Department of Health has made this year to continue improving exceptional customer service and look forward to the continued progression of customer service training and process implementation that will ultimately benefit the constituents we serve. I look forward to sharing our accomplishments and successes in this report every year.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Neall
Secretary

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About the Department of Health

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) works to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care and customer service. The Maryland Department of Health has four major administrations: Public Health Services, Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Maryland Medicaid. MDH also includes 20 statutorily independent health occupation boards and 2 commissions. These boards and commissions license and regulate health care professionals and issue grants as well as conduct research and make recommendations on issues that affect Maryland's health care delivery system. MDH consists of a staff of over 9,000 and a budget of more than \$14.3 billion to provide services to Maryland citizens and communities.

The **Public Health Services Administration** oversees vital public services to Maryland residents including: infectious disease control, environmental health programs, family health services, emergency preparedness and response activities, food safety, health care quality, vital records, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, the State Anatomy Board, and the activities of the 24 local health departments in Maryland.

The **Behavioral Health Administration** promotes recovery, resiliency, health, and wellness for individuals who have emotional, substance use, addictive and/or psychiatric disorders.

The **Developmental Disabilities Administration** provides a coordinated service delivery system to ensure appropriate services for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

The **Maryland Medicaid Administration** implements the Medicaid program, which features the MDH's HealthChoice and Children's Health Insurance Program along with other initiatives, including those that help people with the cost of prescription medications.

The Office of Constituent Services (OCS) is a unique support and services office located in the Office of the Secretary. OCS functions as the MDH customer service center by managing inquiries, casework and direct correspondence via telephone, email, and the website Purechat. Inquiries from the Governor's Office, elected officials, direct inquiries to the MDH website and correspondence to the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries are received, managed and tracked through our adopted web-based software system, Intranet Quorum (IQ). OCS provides information, feedback, and resources to facilitate and assist in citizen access to appropriate services and resources.

Leadership Analysis and FY20 Forecast

In FY19, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) implemented new Controlled Correspondence process guidelines for inquiries from the Governor's office, state and federal elected officials, direct inquiries to the MDH website, and correspondence to the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries. These inquiries are received, managed and tracked through our adopted web-based software system, Intranet Quorum (IQ). In conjunction with IQ, the Office of Constituent Services (OCS) implemented the "**24/7 Rule**" requiring that each inquiry receive an acknowledgement from MDH within **24 hours** of receipt. After the acknowledgement has been sent, the clock will start on a **7 business days** turnaround for case closure. Once the 7 business days have elapsed, the case will be considered overdue. OCS provides information, feedback, and resources to facilitate and assist constituent to access appropriate services and resources. OCS manages case follow-up by remaining engaged with the Correspondence Managers (IQ license holders) throughout MDH and the participating Boards and Commissions to ensure that constituents are receiving timely, compassionate and appropriate conclusion to their inquiry.

During the past eight months, the OCS has strategically and collaboratively worked with Administrations, Offices and Boards/Commissions to identify subject matter experts, administrators, and chiefs of staff to serve as the units' Correspondence Managers, streamlining the constituent services process. Currently, each of the MDH's Administrations and the Offices under the Secretary have multiple staff representation for these processes. Since January 2019, the OCS has introduced IQ to six Health Occupation Boards: Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission, Maryland Board of Dietetic Practice, Maryland Board of Nursing, Maryland Board of Physicians, Maryland Board of Pharmacy, and Maryland Board of Professional Counselors.

In FY20, MDH plans to move into Phase 2 of strategic implementation of Controlled Correspondence. Since March of 2019, OCS has been meeting with individual Offices within Administrations to identify subject matter experts to manage this process. In FY20, OCS plans to add an additional 25 Correspondence Managers to MDH IQ system across Medicaid and Public Health Services, followed by an additional 15-30 Correspondence Managers across Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Office of Constituent Services

Director, Tara Hargadon tara.hargadon@maryland.gov

Deputy Director, Sarah Kilby sarah.kilby@maryland.gov

Controlled Correspondence Manager, Cheryl Paschall cheryl.paschall@maryland.gov

Constituent Services Coordinator, Ronald Pringle ronald.pringle@maryland.gov

Executive Office Associate, Elise Seufert elise.seufert@maryland.gov

FY19 Highlights for the Maryland Department of Health

Behavioral Health Administration (BHA):

- BHA's Office of Public Awareness updated aspects of the 'Talk to Your Doctor', 'How to Administer Naloxone', 'Anti-Stigma', and the 'Good Samaritan Law' campaigns, and introduced a 'Dangers of Fentanyl' campaign. The campaigns were presented through a variety of media platforms with over **176,832,400 impressions**. The platforms measured engagement via:
 - Digital (Social media, Google ad work, geo-fencing)
 - Digital Radio Services
 - Broadcast, Cable and Public TV
 - BHA Social Media Impressions (Facebook, Twitter)
 - Movie Theaters
 - Transit
 - Gas Station Pump Screens
- In collaboration with the University of Maryland Training Center the BHA's Office of Clinical Services held seven one-day SOAR Works! (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) trainings throughout the state.
 - SOAR Train the Trainer workshops were held in August 2018 and in April 2019 rendering seven SOAR certified trainers.
 - Maryland was highlighted as a 2018 SOAR Super Star State, with the third highest approval rate in the country. Maryland also received specific recognition for the consistency and impact of its SOAR program.

Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA):

- During FY19, the DDA and the Assistant Attorney General (AAG) conducted a one-hour instructional webinar to assist DDA staff in interactions with various constituents (e.g., participants, providers, attorneys, government officials, and other stakeholders). The webinar provided guidance on what information can and cannot be shared during communications with stakeholders. This included guidance on the secure use of email and how to respond to constituents if they email staff requesting information.
- The DDA launched weekly webinars in FY19 to inform and educate all stakeholders about the DDA's service delivery system. The webinars included an overview of the topic with opportunities for questions and answers specific to the presentation topic. The DDA wanted to ensure that all stakeholders (people in services, self-advocates, families, providers, an advocacy organization, state staff, etc.) could participate and be informed of current standards and practices. The DDA shared these webinars on its website training calendar at <https://dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/training.aspx>.

Maryland Medicaid Administration (MMA):

- There are ongoing efforts to improve Medicaid eligibility coordination. This includes the establishment of **MDThink**, a shared data platform for social service and health programs across the state. Maryland has launched an MDThink Steering Committee that is currently assessing ways this new system capacity can improve customer service for state residents who apply for and enroll in multiple benefit programs.

Public Health Services Administration (PHS):

- The Dorchester County Department of Health launched a website: www.iwishiknewmidshore.org. The website provides an interactive treatment navigator tool to help people find out the exact steps needed to access treatment based on age, county, insurance coverage, etc. No personal information is collected from this website; it is simply a resource for accessing substance use disorder treatment.
- The Charles County Department of Health created a portal for customers to report health department related complaints, allowing staff to quickly evaluate issues that arise in the county in real-time. Relevant public records are placed on the Charles County Department of Health's website for residents to review to ensure transparency. The website features hyperlinks that assist resident's ability to access multiple points of service, including Administration Care Coordination (ACC)/Ombudsman Program, the REACH Initiative that includes the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Maryland, and the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP).
- Vital Statistics Administrations launched its first call center for the Division of Vital Records (DVR) on August 15, 2019. Since the inception date, DVR has handled an average of 400 calls per day with over 77% of calls answered in less than 1 minute. This call center function is helping streamline questions, requests, and customer service regarding vital statistics and records including birth, death, marriage, and divorce decrees.

Office of Human Resources (OHR):

- MDH's Office of Human Resources hosted an annual career fair that included local health departments, state hospital facilities, and headquarters' units offering the public and potential employees an opportunity to engage staff members within the organizations and to learn specifically about the services they render for MDH and the citizens of Maryland.

Recognition Given to Employees

Annual Employee Recognition Awards

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) hosted the 8th Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony in June 2019. The Employee Recognition Program is an initiative that seeks to recognize both individual and team accomplishments of the MDH staff in the areas of internal and external customer service, exceptional performance, and innovation. Nominations are submitted by employees, which are then screened by a small review panel comprised of staff from different units including Human Resources and the Office of the Secretary. In late June, at MDH Headquarters in Baltimore, both Secretary Robert Neall and Deputy Secretary Frances Phillips presented awards to 41 individuals and 17 teams from Offices and facilities across the state.

During this year's ceremony and stemming from a nomination by the Chief Executive Officer of MDH's Eastern Shore Hospital Center (ESHC), the Secretary awarded the Department's first posthumous award for Exceptional Performance for Carrie Harper, a social worker for ESHC who passed away earlier this year. Carrie's parents and her colleagues were in attendance to honor her and accept the award on her behalf.



ESHC staff join Secretary Neall in honoring Carrie Harper, an ESHC social worker who passed away earlier this year.

Another notable mention from this year's awards for Exceptional Performance was the Division of Vital Records (DVR). To meet the demands of the Real ID Act, DVR made expeditious and drastic changes to address and assist constituents with documentation needed to comply with the new federal identification guidelines. Due to the size of the team of over 70 employees, Secretary Neall and Deputy Secretary Frances Phillips visited the Division of Vital Records' office located on Reisterstown Road in Northwest Baltimore to present their award.



DVR staff join Secretary Neall and Deputy Secretary Phillips to be recognized for their effort in helping Maryland residents comply with the federal REAL ID Act.

Jourdan Green was recognized this year for Exceptional Performance in FY19



Deputy Secretary Phillips recognizes Jourdan Green for Exceptional Performance.

Within a month of beginning her duties at the Maryland Department of Health, Jourdan was left without her supervisor due to an unforeseen extended medical leave. Jourdan single-handedly assumed the roles and responsibilities of the entire Office of Regulation

and Policy Coordination. According to her nominator, Jourdan's excellent work ethic and professional demeanor ensured that the MDH's regulations process continued to operate effectively

Secretary's Customer Service Spotlight

The Secretary's Customer Service Spotlight, inspired by Secretary Robert Neall, shines a "spotlight" on exceptional customer service provided both internally and externally by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) individuals and teams alike. Employees across MDH have the ability to submit nominations. Facilitated by the Office of Constituent Services, nominations for the Secretary's Spotlight are reviewed monthly, with recommendations submitted to the Secretary for final review. Since February, spotlights have been shined on a diverse group of MDH staff, each with their own impressive contributions to the citizens of Maryland and/or fellow MDH colleagues. Each awardee enjoys a meeting and photo opportunity with the Secretary, who presents them with a personally signed letter of thanks. An email announcement to all MDH employees is then distributed formally recognizing the employee and his/her accomplishments. Additionally, the photo of the employee and the Secretary is displayed on monitors throughout MDH Headquarters for a month.



Secretary Neall recognizes Kristi Bingham, Jennifer Edwards, Amanda Ketchen, Marc Ware and Jasmine Crawford (left to right) for exceptional service.

Kristi Bingham, Jennifer Edwards, and Amanda Ketchen, three crisis intervention counselors from the Calvert County Health Department, brought critical and exceptional response and assistance to survivors and first responders as a result of a fatal fire in their community. This team was recognized by Secretary Neall as the Spotlight for May 2019.

Marc Ware, an investigator with the Maryland Board of Massage Therapy Examiners was recognized as the July 2019 Spotlight. Secretary Neall recognized Marc, a veteran in law enforcement, for his innovative processes in coordinating the sometimes tedious and sensitive nature of scenarios that many times present themselves during the investigative phase of the licensing process between the Board and prospective licensees. His nominator remarked, "Mark has the gift of helping the customer feel heard, valued and supported, while carrying out the mission of the Board."

Jasmine Crawford, the April 2019 Secretary's Spotlight awardee alongside Secretary Neall. The former BHA Deputy Secretary nominated Jasmine, who works with the Office of Workforce Development and Technology Transfer within the Behavioral Health Administration, after receiving praise from a very satisfied constituent. The constituent wrote of Jasmine's customer service, "It was an absolute pleasure to land on Ms. Crawford's phone. I am still smiling."

Since the Secretary Spotlight's inception in FY19, Secretary Neall has honored 7 customer service stars:

March 2019, Sheronda Weatherbee, *Maryland Medicaid Office of Health Services*

April 2019, Jasmine Crawford, *Behavioral Health Administration*

May 2019, Jennifer Edwards, Kristi Bingham, Amanda Ketchen, *Public Health Services Administration, Calvert County Local Health Department*

June 2019, Jody Sheely, *Public Health Services Administration, Prevention and Health Promotion*

July 2019, Marc Ware, *Maryland Board of Massage Therapy and Chiropractic Examiners*

August 2019, Dr. Yemonja Smalls, *Developmental Disabilities Administration*

September 2019, Corey Blair, *Maryland Medicaid Pharmacy Program*

FY19 Results and FY20 Plans

FY19 Constituent Voice

Behavioral Health Administration: Email from constituent to the Deputy Secretary:

“My husband, James, and I want to thank you so very much for your immediate attention to the complaint I filed yesterday. You were so gracious to take the time to call me and let us know how you have forwarded this complaint to the correct agency in Harford County, and that the Executive Director of the Harford County Core Service Agency, is aware of the complaint. These days it is very unusual to have a state employee take the time to go over and above when dealing with the public. I know how overworked all MD state employees are, and we sincerely appreciate all the information that you provided us over the course of two phone calls today. Having a disabled adult child is challenging at best, and terrifying at times. It’s so good to know that people like you are there, working on behalf of Maryland citizens who need assistance and who have difficulty advocating for themselves. Thank you again for your prompt attention to this matter.”

Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists: Email from a constituent to the Board Executive Director: “My name is Lindsay. I am emailing you to share with you the pleasant experience that I had with Ms. Alexandria Langston. I called her with questions on how to obtain my LGPC not only was she knowledgeable, but she was patient and polite. Coworkers and students alike have shared with me many experiences that they had when calling the Department of Maryland, so I was already anxious. Ms. Langston was a breath of fresh air. She proved those co-workers and students wrong. To call a Department that experiences different personalities by phone daily Ms. Langston made my issues and questions top priority. She made sure that before I hung up the phone I had everything I needed to move on with confidence. She is a ROCK-STAR!! I just thought that you as her supervisor should know what an OUTSTANDING job she did. I will be sure to contact her with any questions that I have in the future and to send others her way when so they can have the same experience. Have a great Friday!”

Cecil County Health Department: Email from a constituent to CCHD staff: “I recently enrolled in your Diabetic Workshop and I am pleased with the information we were provided by your program associates. I have Type 2 Diabetes and take high doses of medication, including two types of insulin to control my sugar and many times, I do not feel well. This program helped me become more aware of my food choices, portion control, dealing with stress, how to deal with emotions and depression, reading food labels, making healthy food choices, exercise, and communication to name a few. I really enjoyed this program. The associates (DeLois, Jamie, and Mary Ellen) were very friendly and experienced. I felt comfortable sharing my personal feelings and experiences regarding this chronic disease. I highly recommend you continue offering this course. It has a wealth of information most providers do not provide. “

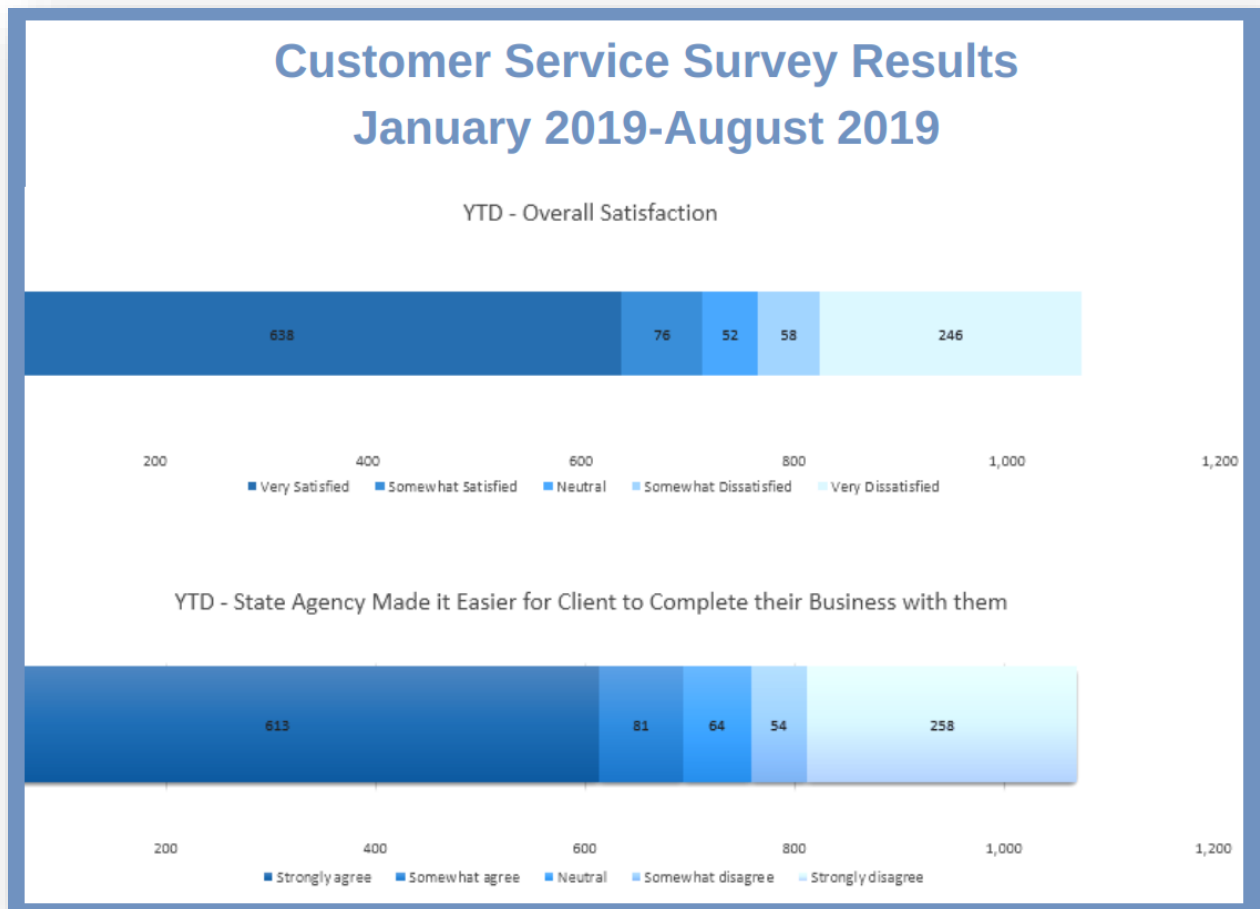
Office of Constituent Services: *Letter to the Secretary from a Delegate:* “I am not sure how many "Job Well Done" letters or comments you get about your staff, but I had to send this out to you to let you know that you have some effective people. Thanks to them I was stopped and thanked regarding the effectiveness of my office by two constituents. In particular, Sarah Kilby and Webster Ye. On two separate Friday afternoons around 3:00PM, two of my constituents contacted me requesting assistance in resolving issues they were having. One was a stage-4 cancer patient, desperately needing a pre-authorization for services. The other was for Medicaid eligibility for prescription drugs. For the constituent with Stage 4 cancer we contacted Mr. Ye as he was driving to Annapolis on I-97 and pulled over to the shoulder in order to get the information to Ms. Kilby. In both cases, Ms. Kilby contacted the constituent within minutes of taking the call. The dedication and professionalism that Mr. Ye and Ms. Kilby demonstrated is to be commended. I am so appreciative of their responsiveness and their willingness to extend themselves in order to assist my constituents. “

Customer Service Survey Results

FY19 has been the year of change for constituent services at the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). We have implemented new processes and strategies to best communicate and serve the constituents of Maryland. Since October 2018, the Office of Constituent Services (OCS) has continually engaged with constituents who are providing survey feedback. MDH receives the appropriate survey results from the Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI) and highlights all neutral to negative survey results. OCS then follows up with each of the highlighted results to:

- 1) Thank the constituent for their time in filling out the survey
- 2) Apologize for the neutral to negative experience
- 3) Offer assistance if the constituent's issue is still not resolved
- 4) Provide an appropriate contact for future inquiries

Following is the FY18 to FY19 survey scale of Satisfied to Dissatisfied experiences with the MDH Administrations and the 22 Health Occupation Boards and Commissions.



Status of Customer Service Training

A detailed presentation on the Governor's Customer Promise is an integral part of the New Employee Orientation held monthly at the Maryland Department of Health (MDH). During this presentation, messaging about the Online Customer Service Training is shared with the clear directive that every employee is to complete the training within the first month of employment at MDH. To date, 98 percent of the MDH employees have completed the Online Customer Service Training.

Since late 2018, the Office of Constituent Services has been conducting Constituent Services and Controlled Correspondence training to targeted staff who engage in front line constituent service work and using the IQ system to track cases and correspondence. These 1.5 hour in-person trainings review the Governor's Customer Service Promise, expectations of the Controlled Correspondence process and the software that manages the process.

A goal of FY20 is for the Office of Constituent Services is to explore department-wide, in person Customer Service training options being offered by the Maryland Department of Budget and Management through the Customer Service Master Contract. OCS has been in contact with both DBM staff managing this project, and internal MDH staff regarding projected costs, needs and timelines for delivering this type of training.

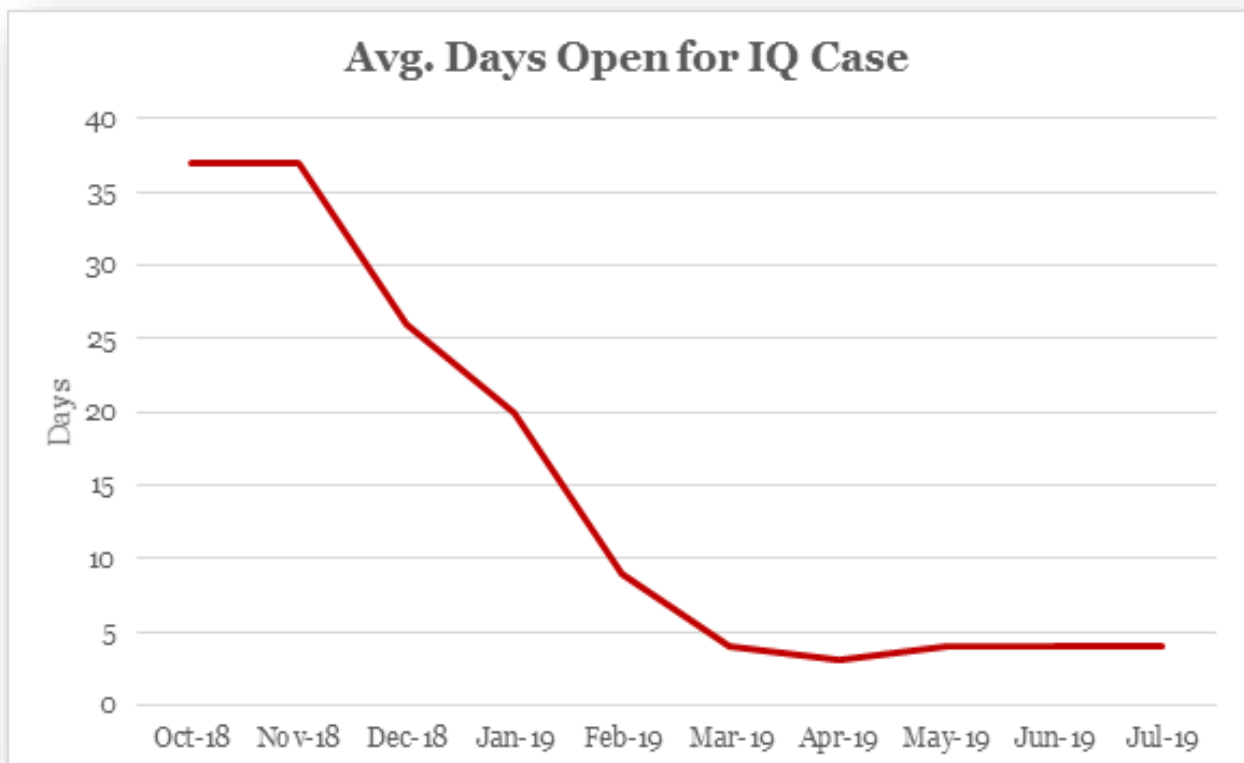


Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution

Timeliness of Responding to Customer Inquiries, Best Practices, and Plans for Improvement

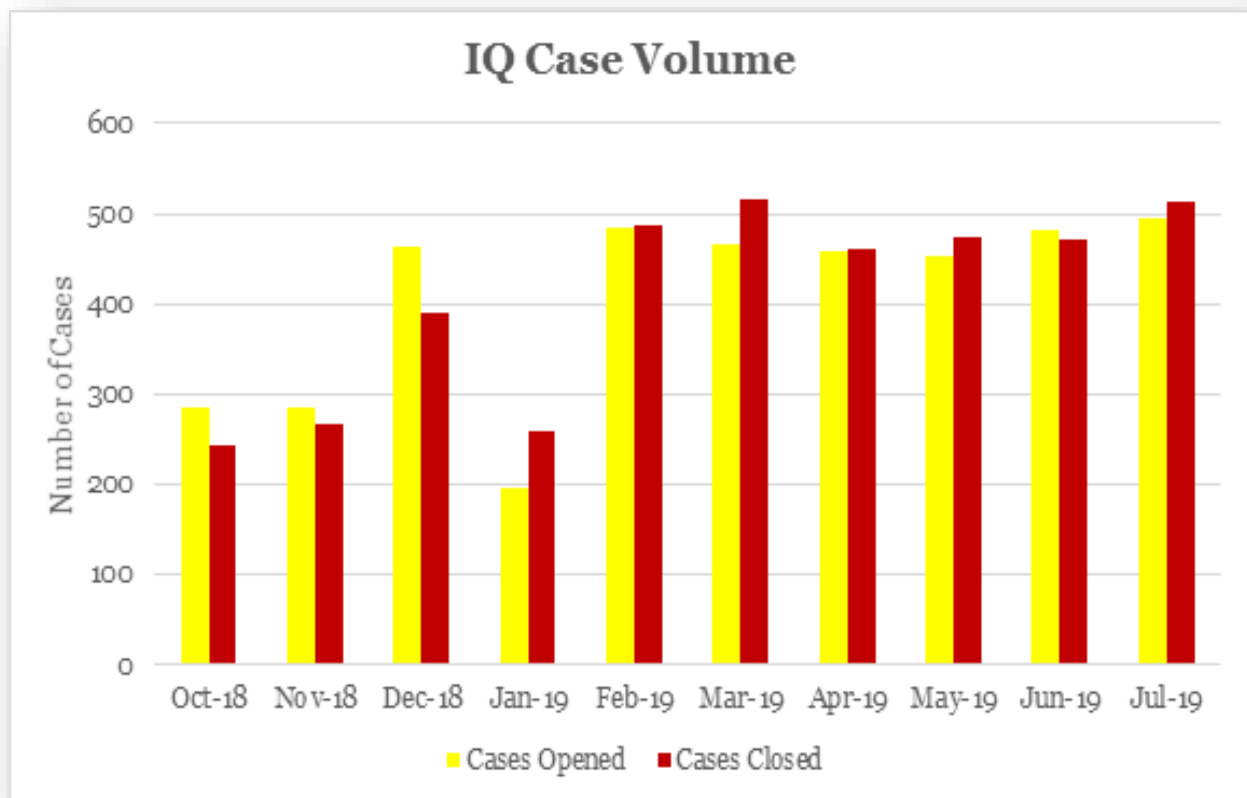
The results of the new Controlled Correspondence process have demonstrated a significant decrease in turnaround times for the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Controlled Correspondence processes and open case volume at any given time.

In conjunction with IQ, the Office of Constituent Services (OCS) implemented the “**24/7 Rule**” requiring that each inquiry receive an acknowledgement from MDH within **24 hours** of receipt. Once the acknowledgement has been sent, the clock starts on a **7-business days** turnaround for case closure. Once the 7 business days have elapsed, the case will be considered overdue. The Office of Constituent Services closely track the cases for status updates during the 7-business day window to ensure that the inquiry is moving towards resolution or completion. The end goal is for MDH staff to provide timely feedback, resources, and assistance to facilitate access to appropriate services and resources for the citizens of Maryland.



In October 2018, the average age of an open case was 37 days; in July 2019, the average age of a case is 4 days.

**Controlled Correspondence Process and IQ implemented in December 2018*



In October 2018, MDH was averaging 250 open cases a month while closing approximately 10% less than what was opened; in July 2019 MDH is averaging 500 open cases a month while closing approximately 1% more than we open.

**Controlled Correspondence Process and IQ implemented in December 2018*

Call Center Data

Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is vast and complex, comprised of multiple administrations, offices, programs, hospitals, local health departments, and off-site call centers. Below are some examples from across MDH to demonstrate volume of constituent activity. The following displayed data is since October 1, 2018:

- **Medicaid: Maryland Medicaid Pharmacy (MMP)** has two call centers, one in house and one Point of Sale claim processing vendor (*Conduent*).
 - **MMP in-house:** Four staff, One supervisor
 - Provides assistance to Medicaid participants, prescribers and pharmacy providers with participants benefits and eligibility, claims submissions details, etc.
 - Operating hours are 8am to 5pm
 - **Calls:** 28,392
 - **Responses:** 26,752
 - **Average call time:** 2 min 60 sec

- **Conduent:** 12 staff including supervisor, pharmacists, and staff
 - Provides Pharmacy providers and prescribers with member's benefits and eligibility, claims submission details, coordination of benefits, etc.
 - Operating hours are 24/7/365
 - **Calls:** 120,512
 - **Responses:** 118,769
 - **Average Call Time:** 13 seconds
- **Maryland Board of Nursing (MBON)** has five departments broken down into 21 phone lines. These phone lines provide assistance to address Certifications, Criminal Background Checks, Discipline and Compliance, Education and Examination as well as Initial RN Applications.
 - Operating hours are 8am-5pm
 - **Calls:** 49,192
 - **Responses:** 32,362
 - **Average call time:** 2 min 53 sec
- **Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission (MMCC)** has one call center that handles one telephone line operated by seven to ten staff members.
 - This phone line provides assistance to patients and caregivers as well as general information pertaining to the Cannabis program.
 - Operating hours are 8:30am-5pm
 - **Calls:** approximately 84,500
 - **Responses:** approximately 84,500
 - **Average call time:** less than a minute
- **Behavioral Health Administration (BHA)** partners with Maryland 211 to offer mental health and substance use disorder services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to Marylanders. The call center —Maryland Crisis Connect — has a dedicated website that offers text and chat features as well as multiple online resources.

MDH continues to closely assess each call center to make appropriate changes and updates for a more streamlined, efficient, customer friendly service.

Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

Making Agency Services Available Online

- **Office of the Secretary**
 - **Webform submissions:** Constituents are able to “Contact Us” directly from the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) website. Webforms ask for contact information, the nature of the inquiry and the appropriate accompanying information which is sent directly to the IQ queue for immediate processing by Office of Constituent Services (OCS)
 - **PureChat:** Constituents have the ability to live chat with OCS staff and receive real-time assistance with their needs. Some of these inquiries are transactional questions, while others turn into casework with the Administrations and/or Health Occupation Boards.
- **Office of Governmental Affairs**
 - **Proposed Regulation Directory:** Constituents have access to a directory of proposed and adopted regulations as well as the contact information for the relevant regulatory units. The MDH website has a “Proposed Regulation” page where constituents can find the text of regulations printed in the Maryland Register and then submit comments to the Office of Regulation and Policy Coordination.
- **Maryland Board of Physicians**
 - **Public Resources Center:** Constituents have access to a plethora of public information on licensees through practitioner profiles, licensure fee updates, how to file a complaint, statutes and regulations, and a direct access to “Contact Us” which sends emails directly to the Board for expedited response and support.

Processing Times for Customer Transactions

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) continuously strives to improve on timeliness and accessibility to services for the citizens of Maryland. In FY19, the Public Health Services Administration faced one of the largest influxes in inquiries due to the federally mandated REAL ID Act. Passed in 2005, the REAL ID Act requires states to upgrade their issuance procedures for driver’s licenses and identity cards. Maryland statute required that the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) begin issuance of REAL ID-compliant licenses beginning in January 2018. The MVA chose to phase in REAL ID compliant licenses as drivers renewed their licenses. MVA forecasted that in January 2019, renewals would increase by six-fold to approximately 100,000 per month. Certified copies of birth certificates are one of the acceptable forms of proof of age and identity.

As a result, the MDH Division of Vital Records and local health departments have experienced a surge in requests for certified copies of birth certificates. This increased volume in birth certificate requests is anticipated through October 2020 due to Maryland's phased-in approach of REAL ID implementation. Multiple local health departments have responded to this surge in birth certificate requests by taking the following actions:

- Additional staff hired in these jurisdictions
- Cross-training all front desk staff to ensure they can assist citizens
- Extending hours by 90 minutes to help process birth certificate requests

The Vital Statistics Administration (VSA):

- Has worked with the Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI) to review processes and offer solutions for shrinking processing times, streamlining deliverables for mail orders and working more efficiently
- Introduced a new numbering system for customers to retrieve orders
- Added additional cashiers, lobby staff, and call-out window attendants during peak hours
- Implemented changes to add a permanently staffed dedicated window to handle birth corrections and amendments for walk-in customers
- Installed kiosks to expedite and validate customer orders in the lobby at Patterson Ave headquarters
- Installed a Procash system through Bank of America in the business office to process and expedite customer payments
- Created Smartsheet forms and tracking for local health departments to place orders for security paper
- Conducted standardized meetings with specific units to track performance and deliverables

Adjusting Hours to Meet Customer Demands

- **Office of the Secretary:** Administrative/clerical staff work staggering hours to provide maximum phone coverage from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Board of Physicians:** The Board's operating business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. However, to provide broader access to the public, staff hours at the Board have been staggered from 7a.m. to 6 p.m. allowing certain staff to be present to interact with constituents that call outside the Board's business hours.
- **Howard County Health Department:** This local health department expanded Vital Records Office hours by 90 minutes to address customer service and meet the demands.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

Maryland Department of Health (MDH) continues to promote the health and safety of all Marylanders through social media marketing on both Twitter and Facebook. Some of the administrations, local health departments and health occupation boards operate their own social media pages to connect with their audience on a more granular level to provide directed content.

- MDH's Office of Communications fields numerous inquiries from the public daily via social media pages, including questions about services, obtaining birth/other vital records, and assistance for various populations and service demographics, including Medicaid, individuals with developmental and physical disabilities and those seeking mental health or substance use disorder treatment.
 - Communications works directly with the Office of Constituent Services to address the inquiries expeditiously.



The Office of Communications disseminates information that is of service to the general public including health care resources, public health announcements, press releases, safety and preparedness information from federal, state and local partners, as well as updates on departmental and statewide initiatives.

As of August 15, 2019:

Facebook Likes 3,436 | Facebook Follows 3,876

Twitter Likes 2,639 | Twitter Follows 6,637

Licensing and Permitting from Multiple Perspectives

- **Maryland Board of Examiners in Optometry**
 - **Online licensing applications:** As of February 2019, license verification and final disciplinary action orders are an online service provided to the public. All forms are fillable online and accessible by applicants, licensees and the public. Licensees are also able to renew their licenses online.
- **Maryland Board of Occupational Therapists**
 - **Continuing Education, Curriculum Approval and Licensing Verification** are all available on the Board's website.
- **Maryland Board of Dietetic Practice**
 - **Online licensing applications:** The Board promotes paperless licensure to streamline the transactional process. Applications, renewals and verifications are all available on the Board's website.
- **Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission**
 - **License Processing** for Growers, Processors and Dispensaries can be granted online after successful completion of Stage I and Stage II of COMAR requirements.
- **Maryland Board of Physicians**
 - **License Lookup** for constituents to identify if a Physician's license is active or inactive.
 - **Licensure Applications** can be completed on or downloaded from the Board's website.

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) employees continue to work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders. MDH staff strives to support and carry out Governor Hogan's Customer Service Promise while carrying out the MDH's vision of lifelong health and wellness for all Marylanders through several customer service touch points demonstrated in this report and more. MDH's customer service focus is on every person, every contact, every day.